

*Maxwell (9) Agent to Sir S. Gidson Bart*

# REASONS

OFFERED TO THE

PROPRIETORS OF ESTATES

IN THE

NORTH LEVEL,

AGAINST THE INTRODUCTION OF ANY

NEW TAX.

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PETERBOROUGH;

PRINTED BY J. JACOB, MDCLXXXVIII.



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# REASONS

## OFFERED AGAINST A NEW TAX

### ON THE

## NORTH LEVEL.

**A** PRINCIPLE of Duty to my Employer, having led me to investigate the nature and Amount of the Funds for supporting the Works of the North Level, a Belief that few of the Proprietors are acquainted with circumstances so materially concerning their Interest, has impelled me to this Publication. If a knowledge of what is here offered should prove of any use to a single Individual, I shall be sufficiently gratified for my trouble. At any rate I hope no one will be offended, at my resisting "A Plan, for raising Money to maintain and preserve the Works belonging to the North Level, and for discharging the Debt contracted thereon," since it appears to me, either to be founded in Error, or to have for its purpose, something widely differing from what its Title implies.

To place the subject in its proper light, a Statement must be made of the two Funds that form the Revenues of the North Level, as follows.

And first as to the Fund for Corporation Works, that is to say, The Works of the Outring Banks of the North Level.

It



It is unnecessary to go further back than the 27, of George II. since by that Act, the Taxes on the Adventurers Lands, which were the only Taxes then subsisting, and which were by that Act applicable in the first place to the making good and keeping in repair the Outring Banks, were settled at a Tax and Quarter per Acre, producing per Annum.

£. s. d.

717 3 6

By 29, GEO II. the Corporation was empowered to borrow 5000l. on the Credit of the above Taxes, and that Sum was accordingly borrowed and expended on the Banks

Deduct from the above the Interest thereof 250 0 0

Remained for support of Works, - - - - - 467 3 6

By 11, GEO. III. a Tax of 6d per Acre was laid on the Adventurers Lands in the North Level.

Acres £. s. d.

11600 producing 290 0 0

6d. per A. on the Free Lands, 20571 producing 514 5 6

3d. per Acre on Portland, 7451 producing 93 2 10

Acres -- 39622

897 8 4

N. B. There is a Power given by this Act for the Proprietors to purchase off this Tax of 897l. 8s. 4d. at 30 years Purchase.

The Rents and contingent Revenues of the Corporation, amounted per Annum to - - - - -

100 0 0

By Virtue of this Act of 11, GEO. III. 20000l. was borrowed and expended on the Banks, the same being chargeable by the Act, on the whole of this Fund of

1464 11 10

Deduct the Interest of 20000l. - - - - - 1000 0 0

Remained for support of Works - - - - - £ 464 11 10

After the Expenditure of the above Money, by the 19, GEO. III. (1779) a Tax was laid of 4d. per Acre on the North Level, and 2d. on Portland, for 9 years for the further support of the Banks, producing the annual Sum of - - - - -

598 5 6

N. B. This Tax ceases at Christmas 1788.

Whole Fund for Support of the Banks, £ 1062 17 4



By the above Statement it appears most clearly, that after the Interest of 25000l. was paid, 1062l. 17s. 4d. was the whole of what the Fund produced for support of the Banks, and Payment of Officers and Collectors Salaries. Let any one take a retrospective View of the State and Condition of the North Bank in the year 1779, and compare it in his own Mind, with what the State and Condition now are in the year 1788. *He will convince himself that it has encreased in size and strength very greatly, so that altho' 464l. 11s. 10d. per Annum, may be an insufficient Fund for the future Support of the Outring Banks, the Impropriety of laying a new Tax, that at the End of 13 years shall encrease that Fund to the enormous Sum of 1714l. 11s. 10d. per Annum, must be obvious, nay glaring as the Sun at Noon.*

But it is *absolutely unnecessary* to lay any fresh Tax either to encrease that Fund, or for the Purpose of paying off the Debt of 25000l. for of the Taxes laid by the 11, GEO. III. the Duke of Bedford pays 440l. and Sir Sampson Gideon 111l. 10s. per Annum, making together (what for the sake of an even Sum, we will call) 550l. per Annum, and as that Act empowers them to purchase off the Tax laid thereby, if those Taxes were bought off, it would raise, 16500l. the Interest of which is 825l. per Annum. — The Difference between the Interest got rid of, (825l.) and the Tax that will cease, (550l.) is 275l. per Annum, besides the saving of near 20l. per Annum for the Collection of those very Taxes that would be bought off, and surely it would be the height of folly for the Duke of Bedford, and Sir Sampson Gideon, to desert the plain track that is before them, and go a round-about and expensive Road to Parliament, to obtain a Power to charge *their own Lands*, with a Tax for the Purpose of paying *themselves*, for thel. are absolutely, of the 25000l, Creditors to the Amount of 16500l. and upwards.

Add the Fund that will be left at Christmas next when the last laid Taxes cease, to the saving that will be produced by the Purchase of these Taxes of the Duke of Bedford's and Sir Sampson Gideon's, and by the lessening of the Collector's Salary, and there will be 760l. per Annum, for Support of Banks only, after Payment of Interest for the Sum of 8500l. the Remainder of the Debt. Besides, the contingent Revenues of the Corporation are *now* considerably more than 100l. per Annum, and they are likely to be still further improved, so that the Fund for Repairs of Banks only, may be fairly stated *at 800l. per Annum,*



*Annum*, and it is presumed that no Person who has attended to the present Condition of the North Bank, *which is wonderfully encreased in Size and Strength*, and to the Improvement of the Outfal, *which renders a large and a strong Bank the less necessary*, can be unreasonable enough to say, that this Fund of 800l. per Annum will be insufficient for the *future* support of the Banks, when 1062l. 17s. 4d. has improved them, from what they were in 1779, to the State they are now in, and when it is a certain Fact, that 400l. per Annum, is the most that has been allowed by the Corporation, upon an Average, for the Repairs of the South Bank, which is only 2 miles in 12 miles and 5 furlongs shorter than the North Bank, to the Repairs of which last, the Expenditure of this Fund hath been almost wholly confined.

And if necessary it might be urged in addition to the above, that the Plan in contemplation actually provides a less Sum than 800l. per Annum for repairs of the Banks during the first eleven years, encreasing the Fund to 1309l. the twelfth year, and to 1409l. the thirteenth year, and leaving 1714l. 11s. 10d. <sup>at the</sup> Expiration of the time to be applied to some Purpose best known to the Proposer of the Scheme.

Next as to the Fund for Commissioners Works, namely The Works of the Outfal of the North Level.

No Tax had been laid for this Purpose, previous to the 27, GEO. II. for till that Time the Outfal had been supported by \* Contribution of the Owners of the Estates now belonging to the Duke of Bedford and Sir Sampson Gideon, as appears by Recitals in the Act; but by the 27th GEO. II. a Tax of 1s. per Acre for four years, and afterwards of 6d. per Acre was laid upon the whole of the North Level including Portland, for the Purpose of supporting the Works of the Outfal, under the Direction of the Commissioners appointed by that Act. This Tax is stamped with the name of the perpetual Tax, altho' it is subject to a diminution, after being lowered as it now is, to 6d. per Acre. This produces per Annum. - - - - -

£. s. d.

990 11 2

\* By the Word Contribution it must not be understood that the Money was actually given for that Purpose by these two Proprietors. It was in Fact only advanced to the Corporation by way of loan, and at the Dismemberment of the North Level, from the other two Levels, it was accounted for as such, in the adjustment of Debts which then took place.

By



By the same Act of the 27, GEO. II. the Commissioners were empowered to borrow 14000l. on the Credit of the above Tax, and that Sum was accordingly borrowed and laid out on the Works of the Outfal, together with the Produce of another Tax subsequently laid for three years, which expired in 1776 or 1777.

A Power was given by the Act of 27 GEO. II. for the Commissioners to lower the *perpetual Tax* (as it is called) after it was reduced to 6d. per Acre as abovementioned, provided the Debt of 14000l. should ever come to be paid off, and to enable them to accomplish that End, By 19, GEO. III. (1779) \* a further Tax was laid of 1s. per Acre on the North Level, and 6d. on Portland, for nine years, which produced 1794l. 16s. 8d. per Annum, and this Fund together with the above 990l. 11s. 2d. was to be applied in the Works of the Outfal and in Discharge of the 14000l. and at the End of the nine years, viz. at Christmas, 1788, the Tax was to cease, leaving the original Fund of 990l. 11s. 2d. for Support of the Outfal, subject to be lowered at the Discretion of the Commissioners as above stated.

Now 1794l. 16s. 8d. per Annum, will in 9 years, *only pay off* 12000l. together with the Interest annually arising on the Debt in its decreasing State, notwithstanding which, the Debt will be got rid of by Christmas 1788, when the Tax ceases. Of course, the other 2000l. must have been made up out of the original Fund of 990l. 11s. 2d. and during the Payment of this Debt, *the Outfal has improved very rapidly*, as any one may judge for himself who observes the Ease with which the Floods in the Wash are now carried off, compared with what was their stagnant state formerly; so that what will remain at Christmas, 1788, viz. 990l. 11s. 2d. will be *more than can possibly be wanted* for the mere purpose, of keeping good the Outfal. — Surely then, the Proprietors of Estates have a right to expect that the Commissioners will lower the perpetual Tax, from 6d. to 4d. an Acre.

This is the true State of the two Funds that form the Revenues of the North Level, from which it is presumed every Proprietor may judge for himself as to the Expediency or Necessity of the measure proposed. — In this place it might easily be shewn, that the Scheme for a new Tax of 1s. per Acre as meant to be introduced for 13 years will not

\* N. B. This Tax ceases at Christmas, 1788.



at the Expiration of that Period, accomplish the smallest reduction of the Taxes that will subsist at Christmas next; and if so, for what Purpose can the Proprietors, of Estates be expected to burthen themselves with a fresh Tax to raise Money to pay off the Debt of 25000l. when their Estates will continue to pay the Interest of that Sum, *in the same Manner as if the Debt still subsisted?* It might likewise be shewn, that the Debt doth not attach the Adventurers Lands, and the Free Lands, in the North Level in equal Proportions, *but far otherwise;* and if so will it not be unreasonable and unjust in the highest degree to call upon the Free Lands for an equal Tax to be applied in Discharge of that Debt? It might further be shewn, that under all possible Circumstances of Expediency or Necessity of introducing a new Tax, the application for it is premature, since the state of the unappropriated Fund arising from the old Taxes, which do not expire till Christmas 1788, cannot in the Nature of Things, be ascertained until Midsummer 1789, when the Accounts will be laid before the Commissioners: and if so, is it not indecent and improper, to introduce a Scheme for a new Tax, before a single Proprietor can judge with Precision, of the Effects of the old ones? But meaning to confine the Argument to the mere Necessity of the measure proposed, and *having already proved* (as it is hoped) in a satisfactory manner, that it is *absolutely unnecessary* to lay any fresh Tax for the Augmentation of the Funds, or for the Payment of the Debt, the Reduction of the Debt by the means provided by the Act of 27 GEO. II. necessarily bringing about an Encrease of the Funds; it remains only to consider how far the Duke of Bedford, and Sir Sampson Gideon will be affected by the proposed Scheme of buying off their Shares of the Tax laid by the 11. of GEO. III. — As to the other Proprietors there can be no Question on the Subject, it being undoubtedly their Interest, since there will be a saving to them, *of all the Money that would be taken from them by the new Tax*, which in the 13 years would be no less a Sum than twelve Thousand and seventy-five Pounds.

As to the Duke of Bedford.

We will suppose that 12500l. of his Grace's Debt shall be paid off.

\* The new Tax would take from his Grace 880l. per } £. s. d.  
Annum, which with the Interest thereof for 13 years is } 15400 0 0

\* The Purchase of the Tax of 6d. per Acre, at 30 years Purchase, and the Continuation of it, amounting to the same sum, they are not necessary to be stated on either side of the Account.

The



	Brought forward	£	s.	d.
		15400	0	0
The Interest of 12500l. part of his	Grace's Debt, at 5 per Cent. is -	£	l.	s.
		625	0	0
The Outgoings of his Grace's Estate	will be lessened by the Purchase of	440	0	0
	the Tax at 6d. per Acre. - - -			

His Grace's Income will be lowered the sum of 185 0 0

Which at 30 years Purchase is - - - 5550 0 0

The Duke of Bedford will gain by purchasing the  
Tax of 6d. per Acre, instead of charging his Estate } £ 9850 0 0  
with a new Tax of 1s. an Acre for 13 years - - -

As to Sir Sampson Gideon,

We will suppose that 4000l. of his Debt shall be paid off.

The new Tax would take from him 223l. per Annum, }				
which with the Interest thereof for 13 years, is }	3947	0	0	
The Interest of 4000l. part of Sir Samp-	£	s.	d.	
son Gideon's Debt, at 5 per Cent, is }	200	0	0	
The Outgoings of his Estate will be less-	114	10	0	
ened by Purchase of the Tax, - - - }				

The lessening of Sir Sampson Gideon's }  
Income will be - - - - - } 88 10 0

Which at 30 years Purchase is - - - - - 2655 0 0

Sir Sampson Gideon will gain by purchasing the  
Tax of 6d. per Acre, instead of charging his Estate } £ 1292 0 0  
with the new Tax, - - - - - }

Thus it clearly appears that the following Sums would be thrown  
away by the measure of introducing the new Tax. viz.

The Duke of Bedford would lose - - -	9850	0	0
Sir Sampson Gideon would lose - - -	1292	0	0
The other Proprietors would lose - - -	12075	0	0

The Loss in the whole would be the enormous Sum of £ 23217 0 0

This



○ This plain State of the mischievous Consequences that would attend the Introduction of the new Tax, almost staggers Belief, and yet the whole Foundation on which these Facts are built, must be done away, before their Credit can be impeach'd; but if this cannot be done it is hoped the Scheme will be abandoned, and instead thereof, that it will be recommended to the large Proprietors to emancipate their Estates, from the shackles of part of those Taxes that already subsist. Indeed the whole Debt might be got rid of by the same means, in which Case, the aggregate Funds for the Works of the North Level, would, with the Saving of the Receiver's Salary, amount to Two Thousand Pounds subject to Payment of not a Shilling Interest: A Fund so much above what is likely to be wanted, that there are very flattering reasons for believing that by the same Management which has hitherto been practiced, the Works would be kept in an improving State, and a gradual diminution of the still remaining Taxes might be annually made, till in the End landed Property in the North Level, might produce something more than ideal Wealth or imaginary Income.

Fletton near Peterborough,  
August 5th, 1778.

GEO. MAXWELL, Agent  
to Sir Sampson Gideon, Bart.





